

MEETING - 6 NOVEMBER 1963 - - - E. D. H.

In the event Mr. Gudex was ill and unable to come from Hamilton, which was a disappointment. But he very decently sent up his slides and an annotated list. Mr. Lediard showed the slides while Mrs. Hynes gave a commentary and the whole proved most interesting. There was much mountain-cum-forest and one or two nostalgic scenes of past Bot. Soc. adventures. Among the more strictly botanical shots were several plants not often met with. Northasella salicornioides, a mistletoe parasitic on manuka. Cyathea cunninghamii, a magnificently picturesque tree fern ( on one of which I noted some epiphytic Earina ). Ophioglossum pedunculatum, one of the least fernlike of ferns, a yellow-flowered Pittosporum and several colourful fungi. Another that caused some comment showed a fascinating geological squiggle that reminded me of Maori rock carvings.

And then came supper. To celebrate the last meeting of the year Mrs. Lediard and her friends put on a special show. As Susan said, it truly was a super supper.

Finally a run of slides showing the upper Waimakariri area where the Bot. Soc. intend to go in January. Mostly taken in the winter, with the snow very white and the sky very blue, and the hillsides very vertical. Some absolutely perfect scenery about which we shall undoubtedly hear more later.

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#### FERTILISATION OF HIBISCUS TRIONUM Linn.

I have grown Hibiscus trionum at home here for upwards of 20 years and have often wondered how it managed to set so much seed, seeing that the flowers last only for one day. The answer is easily come by - the flowers fertilise themselves - by the stigmas going to the pollen, instead of the usual method of taking the pollen to the stigmas. The yellow anthers are pin-cushioned round the ovary and the whole is topped by the dark velvety 5-fid stigma with its rather long styles. When the flower opens in the morning these styles are closely erect, but as the day wears they move outward and downward until by nightfall they have bent themselves double and buried their stigmas well in among the pollen. There is of course nothing to stop insects cross-pollinating the flowers and this does frequently happen, but in the absence of insects the flowers are fertilised just the same. E. D. H.

We left Auckland just after 9am and diverted beyond Cornwallis at Miss Crookes suggestion to view the entrance of the Manukau Harbour, from the promontory on which stands a monument to Flying Officer Spragg ( one of the Spraggs Bush family ). There was very little of botanical interest except a few orchids in bloom. Thelymitra longifolia and Caladenia carnea var minor. There were also a few clumps of Dracophyllum sinclairii amongst the stunted wind blown Leptospermum.

We then went on to Huia and were met by Mr. and Mrs. Wood who led us to the Karamatura stream off the Little Huia Road. The day was beautifully fine and not too hot. About 40 of our members started off along this very pleasant stony creek. At the beginning we passed through a small reserve which is being constructed by the Centennial Parks Board - 7 acres of undulating river bank have been mown and the result is an excellent picnic ground. The track was rather spoilt at first by a number of exotic weeds, relics of past human occupation, I presume sawmillers in the days of kauri milling during the last century. About half a mile from the road we encountered a small stand of kanuka, Leptospermum cricoides, 20-30ft high and from here passed into the actual gorge, the almost vertical sides of which rise to several hundred feet.

The following list of plants of special interest was given to us by Mrs. Wood before starting -

Ferns

Anarthropteris lanceolata  
Adiantum diaphanum  
Arthropteris tenella  
Asplenium lamprophyllum  
Crepidopteris endlicheriana  
Ctenopteris heterophylla  
Grammitis billardieri  
Hymenophyllum revolutum  
Mecodium flexuosum  
M. scabrum  
M. dilatatum  
M. sanguinolentum  
M. gemisum  
Pellaea rotundifolia

Trees

Laurelia novae-zelandiae  
Pittosporum eugenioides  
Entelea arborescens  
Lophomyrtus bullata  
Sophora microphylla  
Helichrysum glomeratum

Herbs

Libertia ixioides  
Phormium colensoi  
Parietaria debilis  
Gnaphalium kerriense

The Asplenium lamprophyllum was outstanding, also the whau, Entelea arborescens, which was in flower. Some of the other plants noticed were karaka, Corynocarpus laevigatus; our little native Gloxinia, Rhebdothamnus solandri; hinau, Eleocharis dentatus; a small patch of Pratia flowers on the river bank;

A Carnichaedia alligera with leaves 1cm broad; Dracophyllum latifolium; miro, Podocarpus ferrugineus; putaputaweta, Carpodetus scriatus; Coprosma lucida, australis, arborea and rhamnoides; Pittosporum cornifolium; tanekaha, Phyllocladus trichomanoides; nikau, Rhopalostylis sapida quite plentiful; a few small kauri, Agathis australis; native honeysuckle, Knightia excelsa; tawa, Bellschmidia tawa; the ubiquitous hangahange, Geniostoma ligustrifolium; also mangemange Lygodium articulatum, climbing prettily alongside the track. After lunch, which we had on the track under an overhanging rock, the party went a hundred yards or so further up to a weird creepy looking semi cave under a huge vertical cliff. The roots of a large pukatea, Laurelia novae zelandiae, wandered or should I say undulated through a slimy pool, looking like a number of sea serpents; or perhaps the Maori taniwha - who knows? A very large liverwort covered the stones, and on the overhanging cliff we could see Blechnum filiforme with numerous fertile fronds from which the Fern gets its second name. For half an hour or so we wandered here and there, some in the bush and some on the banks of the stream. One of our junior members working upstream reported the remains of a log jam left behind by the bushmen. Eleven orchid species were encountered on the journey, none worth remarking, although Mrs. Wood did say she had not previously recorded Thelymitra aemula from the area.

Wandering slowly back we caught our bus at 3pm and drove to Mr. and Mrs. Woods place at Huia where we were given a very welcome cup of tea and strolled round their excellent garden, marvelling at what these two enthusiasts had created out of nothing. A list of their plant possessions would fill a small book and has to be seen to be believed. After a vote of thanks by our President Mr. Lediard, which was carried by acclamation, we left Huia at 4pm.

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IN PRAISE OF WESLEY SPRAGG - - - B. D. H.

Mr. Butlers disappointment with the Wesley Spragg reserve prompts me to write a few words in its praise. The top of the ridge is a veritable oasis of gum scrub flora - in a coastal setting. The short windswept manuka barely prevents erosion and bare clay patches are frequent. The scrub includes Dracophyllum sinclairii, Persoonia toru, Hakea acicularis, Pomaderris kumeraho and Phormium colensoi. The ground cover reminds me of the Albany Hills and includes Heloragis procumbens, Schizaea fistulosa, Lindsaea linearis, Gleichenia circinata, Pterostylis barbata, Presophyllum pumilum, Thelymitra carnea imberbis and aristata, Pomaderris phyllifolia, Pincklea prostrata, Cyathodes fraseri, Wahlenbergia gracilis, Gahnia gahniiformis, Gaultheria antipoda, Cordyline pumilio and Drosera auriculata.

The coastal slopes are fairly normal kauri-pohutukawa association, with salt-marsh and sea-cliff for variety. I record 20 species of orchids from the area and the white flowered poroporo, Solanum aviculare var albiflorum. I notice this year in particular that the pohutukawas have been badly chewed, presumably by opossums.